

From: Mason, Steve
To: [Smith, Monica](#)
Subject: RE: Need Review and Approval for Media response - ANY COMMENTS ON EDITS?
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2019 6:26:00 AM

I made a few minor changes

With Regards, Steve



Stephen Mason
EPA Region 6 (6SF-PE)
1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, TX 75202
214-685-2276
mason.steve@epa.gov

"Frequently, my thoughts get bored and walk down to my mouth. Often, this is a bad thing."

From: Smith, Monica
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2019 5:53 AM
To: Mason, Steve <mason.steve@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Need Review and Approval for Media response - ANY COMMENTS ON EDITS?

Monica Smith
Chief,
Planning, Prevention, Readiness & Response Section (6SF-EA)
214-665-6780 office
469-766-3398 cell
smith.monica@epa.gov

From: Crossland, Ronnie
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2019 9:32 PM
To: Bokun, Lisa <Bokun.Lisa@epa.gov>; Smith, Monica <smith.monica@epa.gov>; Petersen, Chris <petersen.chris@epa.gov>; Rauscher, Jon <Rauscher.Jon@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Need Review and Approval for Media response

Lisa and Jon,

I made a few edits on the stuff that Carmen pull together. I used red line and strike out to show the changes. On Question 3, I pulled language from TCEQs press release and tweaked it for EPA. I need Jon Rauscher to review it and edit it as appropriate. I highlighted a portion in red that needs to be filled in with the correct value for our monitoring results. Everyone else, please review.

Thanks,
Ronnie

From: Bokun, Lisa

Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2019 7:40 PM

To: Crossland, Ronnie <Crossland.Ronnie@epa.gov>; Smith, Monica <smith.monica@epa.gov>; Petersen, Chris <petersen.chris@epa.gov>

Subject: FW: Need Review and Approval for Media response

We need to hear from y'all on proposed response before we can send to David for final review/approval. Any issues?

From: Assunto, Carmen

Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2019 3:18 PM

To: Crossland, Ronnie <Crossland.Ronnie@epa.gov>; Smith, Monica <smith.monica@epa.gov>; Petersen, Chris <petersen.chris@epa.gov>; Adams, Adam <Adams.Adam@epa.gov>; Loesel, Matthew <loesel.matthew@epa.gov>; Mason, Steve <mason.steve@epa.gov>; Smalley, Bryant <smalley.bryant@epa.gov>

Cc: Bokun, Lisa <Bokun.Lisa@epa.gov>

Subject: Need Review and Approval for Media response

Here is a media inquiry and our suggested response. Please review and approve.

1. What is the EPA in charge of in this investigation, what is exactly being done. Which agencies are accountable for which parts of the investigation (Who is accountable?).

EPA joined with ITC, the U.S. Coast Guard, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Harris County, and local response agencies in a Unified Command on March 17, 2019. EPA and TCEQ are working together to conduct is conducting area air monitoring and collecting water samples along the firefighting water drainage path. EPA and TCEQ are is providing monitoring sample results and data to the Unified Command. Other agencies are providing assistance according to their expertise.

2. What are the potential health concerns that you are watching closely and why? What test are you doing to check these?

EPA and TCEQ are monitoring the for possible elevate levels of volatile organic compounds and sampling runoff water that could contain chemicals released during the response to the incident. monitored for significant or elevated detections of hazardous chemicals or particulates in the air that could cause public health impacts.

3. Shell in Deer Park told its employees not to come to work because of benzene levels which exceed the permissible limit. Is your investigation finding this? Were you aware of this?

Because fires are no longer burning up fuel sources in the tanks, EPA and TCEQ have observed

concentrations of benzene fluctuating in the vicinity of the ITC property. Vapor suppression activities are being conducted at the site.

Monitored levels of benzene have not reached a point of short-term health concern with a maximum of 66.6 parts per billion. Short-term exposure to one-hour benzene concentrations below 180 ppb are not of health concern. On March 21, 2019, EPA will have its Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer, or TAGA bus, which is a self-contained mobile laboratory capable of real-time sampling and of outdoor air or emissions monitoring in the area.

EPA and TCEQ continue to monitor air quality with handheld equipment, and the EPA ASPECT airplane will continue to provide air monitoring flights over the area.

Local government officials will use this data to further assess any necessary actions regarding public health.

~~From all aerial and on the ground air monitoring conducted by EPA throughout this response, no significant detections of hazardous chemicals or particulates have been measured to date.~~

4. ITC mentioned that it had concerns over returning to the investigation because of safety and that it would do soil testing. Is this a concern for public health? What is the status of your soil, water and air investigations? *Where can we get timely updates to your findings?

Onsite soil contamination at ITC would not be a cause of immediate concern for public health. Our current focus is on the air and water assessments. Our environmental sampling data is available at https://response.epa.gov/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=14150

5. Where can people get information if they are concerned about the investigations or public health concerns?

People should always listen to local authorities for information about concerns in their area. Harris County is posting information to <https://www.readyharris.org/Deer-Park-Fire>. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality information is at <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/response/itc-terminal-fire-update>. In addition, ITC is providing information on its website at <http://www.iterm.com/>.

6. What will be coming down your pipeline next? What will we be hearing from you and when can we expect updates?

We will continue to assist the Unified Command and publish our sampling data at

https://response.epa.gov/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=14150 as it becomes available.

Sincerely,

Carmen Assunto
State and Local Liaison
U.S. EPA Region 6
Houston Laboratory
281-983-2196

From: Aragon, Rose-Ann <raragon@kprc.com>

Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2019 1:09 PM

To: Gray, David <gray.david@epa.gov>

Subject: KPRC Questions 3/20

Hi David:

My name is Rose-Ann Aragon, and I am a reporter with KPRC-TV in Houston. I am emailing about the Deer Park tank fire at ITC. Our goal is to get the most accurate and updated information to help our viewers and keep them informed. As you can imagine, there is a lot of confusion and potential fear that we would like to put to rest with good information from credible sources. We believe the following questions are fair and reasonable considering the magnitude of the fire and the impact on the community. We are constantly hearing from our viewers who are particularly interested in transparency and potential issues with public health. We are hoping that you can answer these to the best of your abilities.

I will follow up with you on these questions. I appreciate your help.

Topic 1) What is the EPA in charge of in this investigation, what is exactly being done. Which agencies are accountable for which parts of the investigation (Who is accountable?).

2) What are the potential health concerns that you are watching closely and why? What test are you doing to check these?

3) Shell in Deer Park told its employees not to come to work because of benzene levels which exceed the permissible limit. Is your investigation finding this? Were you aware of this?

4) ITC mentioned that it had concerns over returning to the investigation because of safety and that it would do soil testing. Is this this a concern for public health? What is the status of your soil, water and air investigations? *Where can we get timely updates to your findings?

5) Where can people get information if they are concerned about the investigations or public health concerns?

6) What will be coming down your pipeline next? What will we be hearing from you and when can we expect updates?

Please feel free to call if you need clarification on any questions. Thank you again!